

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR EXTENSION OF OPM FORM 1203

Justification

1. **Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Include identification of any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.**

OPM is responsible for open competitive examinations for admissions to the competitive service in accordance with section 3304 of title 5, United States Code. OPM is specifically authorized to collect such information as required to carry out its responsibility to examine applicants for competitive service positions. Section 1104 of title 5 allows OPM to authorize agencies to rate applicants for Federal jobs. A copy of the cited statute is presented in Attachment 1 (sections 1104, 1302, 3301, and 3304 of title 5, United States Code).

2. **Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

Under continuing efforts to modernize and streamline the Federal examining system, many job vacancies are filled from applicants whose applications reside in an electronic inventory. OPM has expanded the use of automated staffing systems in order to more effectively identify the best qualified applicants to meet agency staffing needs. With this form we collect information from applicants regarding their background and experience. The information collected on this form is loaded to computerized applicant inventories, which enables automated screening of applicants based on employment availability and qualifications. Collection of applicant information with this form permits OPM to make faster and more appropriate selections of applicants in order to meet agencies' specific recruiting needs.

3. **Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection.**

The information must be collected from all job applicants. Alternatives exist for applicants to enter this information using a user-friendly online application via the internet. This form is used by job applicants who cannot or will not use this other electronic means of applying. Forms are available on the OPM's Forms web site (<http://www.opm.gov/forms>) and via a "Forms" link on OPM's USAJOBS web site (<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>). Applicants will be able to obtain printed copies of the form when using either web site. This method of collecting information will provide convenience and an alternate method to apply for employment in the Federal service.

The 1203-FX version is used to collect information when a vacancy announcement requires up to 180 occupational questions. The 1203-EZ version was designed for a vacancy announcement that required 60 or less occupational questions and will be discontinued. The number of occupational questions is dependent on the specific vacancy announcement and the type of questionnaire designed by the user.

4. **Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

OPM is the sole authority to collect this information, therefore, duplication is minimized.

5. **If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize the burden.**

Not applicable

6. **Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection were conducted less frequently.**

Less frequent collection in this context would equate to fewer applications for Federal employment. Fewer applications could significantly impair the ability of Federal agencies to fill critical job vacancies.

7. **Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.**

Not applicable

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to OMB.

A notice of proposed information collection was published in the Federal Register on November 9th 2005 (*Federal Register Notice / Volume 70, No. 216*), as required by 5 CFR 1320, allowing the public an opportunity to comment on the form. Only one comment was received from the Department of the Treasury. "None (bureaus) are using the three-page version, OPM Form 1203-EZ; therefore, we have no objections to OPM's plans to discontinue this three-page version." Further, "...we definitely do see the need for continued use of the regular OPM Form 1203-FX, and are glad to hear that OPM plans to continue its availability."

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.

Not applicable.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

The information collected is maintained in a secure computer inventory. Access to the information collected on this form is strictly controlled and limited to appropriate OPM personnel and authorized Federal personnel from other agencies. The paper forms are maintained in confidential files. All records developed from the information collected will be purged and destroyed in accordance with record keeping schedules. We certify that the information collection complies with the Privacy Act of 1974.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

Not applicable.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Due to the fact that this form is used to collect qualifications information for a variety of occupations, as well as the varying levels of experience of the applicants, completion time varies. OPM previously reported 300,000 respondents per year online. Of this it was estimated that there would be 140,000 written responses using the 1203-FX. However; we have found that there was an increase of approximately 1,000,000 online resumes processed on USAJOBS annually and of that number Form 1203-FX usage reduced to 54,202 applications annually. The average completion time is still 30 minutes for the 1203-FX; yielding an estimated annual burden of 27,101 hours from the estimated 70,000 hours.

Since the Form 1203-EZ use was estimated at 60,000 written responses and it is not being used, the public burden is further decreased by 22,000 hours.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no cost to the applicant.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government. Also provide a description of the method used to estimate cost which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff) and any other expenses that would not have been incurred without the paperwork burden.

The annualized cost to the Federal government is estimated at \$ 250,000 for the 1203-FX. This cost includes overhead, direct labor, forms design, development, and printing.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

The change in the public burden varies based on the number of applicants using Form 1203-FX and the number of questions asked on the questionnaire. There has been a decrease in the number of applicants using the Form 1203-FX because more applicants apply using the online questionnaire. As more applications are received electronically, cost burdens associated with processing this form will be further reduced.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Not applicable. The results of this information collection are not published.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

We seek not to display the expiration date because it is not cost-effective to reprint the whole supply of forms to change the OMB clearance expiration date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.

No exceptions